

125 YEARS OF OPTOMETRY



■ **January 1891**—*The Optician* launched by Frederick Boger, with a mandate to “be for its readers a fountain-head of reliable information—a monthly visitor, in whose columns will be found a clear exposition of all the latest ideas and suggestions.” First issue includes a feature from Charles Prentice, “the father of optometry.”

■ **February 1891**—Boger writes an editorial on the need for a national association of opticians.

■ **April 1891**—Carnegie Hall opens in New York.

■ **December 1891**—*The Optician* completes its first year by announcing it has 850 subscribers.

■ **1901**—First licensure law passed in Minnesota.

■ **1902**—A periodical named *The Focus*, started in 1900 or 1901, merges with *The Optical Journal*.

■ **December 17, 1903**—The Wright brothers pilot the first airplane at Kitty Hawk, NC.

■ **March 1904**—*The Optical Journal* changes from a monthly to a weekly publication.

■ **1906**—*The Optical Instrument Monthly*, begins operation. It was soon taken over by *The Optical Journal*.

■ **1907**—*The Jeweler's Circular-Weekly*, which had started devoting space to optical matters in the early 1880s, launches a publication named *The Optical Review*.

■ **March 2, 1909**—Henry Bausch passes away. (Obituary published in *The Optical Review*.)



■ **1922**—First Conference on Optometric Education held in St. Louis, establishing optometric educational standards.

■ **1922**—The American Academy of Optometry begins after many false starts.

■ **1923**—Legislation adopted in PA gives Pennsylvania College of Optometry authority to award the Doctor of Optometry degree, a first in the US.

■ **October 1, 1919**—Cincinnati wallops Chicago in game 1 of the World Series, winning 9-1. After a year of rumors, Chicago star “Shoeless” Joe Jackson confirms they threw the series in exchange for payoffs from gamblers.

■ **Nov. 18, 1928**—Walt Disney debuts first animated film with synchronized sound, *Steamboat Willie*, introducing the world to Mickey and Minnie Mouse.



■ **1935**—PA College of Optometry increases graduation requirement to four years of coursework, up from three.

■ **1937**—*Reader's Digest* publishes “Optometry on Trial,” a scathing critique of the profession.

■ **1947**

Congress creates the Optometry Corps, allowing for the commission of optometrists in the military. ODs are placed on the staff of VA hospitals.



■ **1895**—Charles Prentice charges a fee for an eye exam, enraging a group of NY ophthalmologists who threaten to have him arrested.

■ **March 1895**—Name changed to *The Optical Journal*. Debut issue in this form includes an article using the word “optometry” to describe the science of refraction.

■ **1898**—American Association of Opticians (precursor to the American Optometric Association) is formed.

■ **1895**—Guglielmo Marconi invents the wireless telegraph.



■ **1900**—Bayer launches aspirin in water-soluble pill form, the first medication to use this delivery vehicle.

■ **1910**—*The Optical Journal* merges with *The Optical Review* to form *The Optical Journal and Review of Optometry*. It would operate under that name for the next 67 years.



■ **1910**—Columbia University School of Optometry enrolls its first students. It would be shut down in 1954 in the face of opposition from ophthalmology.

■ **1919**—International Board of Boards (IBB) established. Name changed to International Association of Boards of Examiners in Optometry (IAB) in 1954, and to the Association of Regulatory Boards (ARBO) in 1999.

■ **1919**—Texas optometrist Fred Baker arrested for charging a fee. In 1921, he won the case against him and Texas became the final state to approve an optometry licensure law.

■ **1947**

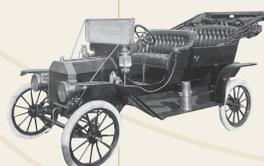
Optometrist Robert Graham develops ophthalmic lenses made from CR-39, a moldable plastic, allowing the move from glass lenses to shatterproof plastic for better safety and greater variety in shape.

■ **1948**

Irvin Borish publishes *Clinical Refraction*, a landmark text used by optometry students for decades.

■ **1950**

In the first major federal intervention to advance optometry, Congress grants ODs privileges to certify blind patients for pensions, despite fierce lobbying from



■ **October 1, 1908**—Ford's Model T hits the roads.

■ **1911**—*Dynamic Skiametry in Theory and Practice* by Andrew Cross, an early retinoscopy text, is published.

■ **1911**—Alva Cross serves as presiding officer over the AOA congress, the first woman in a leadership role in optometry.

■ **May 7, 1915**—128 Americans killed in a German attack on the British liner *The Lusitania*.

■ **April 6, 1917**—US declares war on Germany.

■ **1924**—Last optometric licensure law passes, in the District of Columbia, completing a 23-year effort for legal status nationwide.

■ **1925**—The AOA forms the Council on Optometric Education to accredit optometric education institutions.

■ **1928**—Bacteriologist Alexander Fleming accidentally discovers the antibacterial properties of penicillin after leaving a Petri dish of *Staphylococcus* uncovered.

■ **1937**—Bill in PA legislature to permit optometrists to use drugs for diagnosis and treatment and perform limited eye surgery fails by one vote.

■ **1954**

Leaders meet in Seattle to discuss how to combat ophthalmology's skulduggery following the closure of the Columbia University School of Optometry, and resolve to prohibit “untrained and unlicensed persons” from practicing optometry.

■ **1938**—*Neill vs. Gimbel* case decides that optometry is not part of medicine.

■ **Dec. 7, 1941**—Japan bombs Pearl Harbor.

■ **Milestones in Optometry**
■ **Review of Optometry History**
■ **Events in the Culture**

Thanks to Irving Bennett, OD, Ron Ferrucci, OD, and the AOA's Kirsten Hebert for research assistance

■ **1964**—Cyrus Bass files lawsuit against the American Medical Association, charging it with anti-trade violations.

■ **1965**—An act of Congress creates the Medicare program, but leaves optometry out of the bill.

■ **May 15, 1977**

Review of Optometry, after years of minimizing *The Optical Journal* in its logo, finally omits it altogether to emphasize the optometrist's role as a health professional.



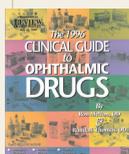
■ **1955**—A group of Oakland optometrists form California Vision Services, the first prepaid vision plan in America. In 1976, after growing to nationwide coverage, it changes name to VSP.

■ **1965**—*Optometric Management* launched with emphasis on improving the business acumen of practicing optometrists.

■ **1968**—American Optometric Student Association begins.

■ **1969**—National Optometric Association founded in Richmond, VA with the goal of advancing the visual health of minority populations.

■ **1970**—Optometrists employed by the City of New York for vision care form the first union of optometrists in the United States. A second union started by Kaiser-Permanente in 1971 still operates in 2016.



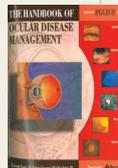
■ **May 1996**—*Review* publishes the first issue of its highly popular *Clinical Guide to Ophthalmic Drugs*, an annual supplement by optometrists Ron Melton and Randall Thomas.

■ **October 1990**—The American Public Health Association passes the “Access to Treatment for Eye Care by Optometrists” resolution condoning DPA and TPA use by optometrists, accelerating the pace of legislative victories in several states.

■ **July 4, 2012**—The Higgs boson particle is discovered, solving a fundamental problem of particle physics.

■ **1984**—Optometrist Jimmy Bartlett publishes *Clinical Ocular Pharmacology*, an indispensable text on the proper use of therapeutic drugs.

■ **March 1997**—Debut of the annual *Handbook of Ocular Disease Management* by optometric educators Joseph Sowka, Andrew Gurwood and Alan Kabat.



■ **1998**—Oklahoma passes the first law allowing limited use of lasers by optometrists.

■ **2005**—Oklahoma regains the right to use lasers after losing it.

■ **2011**—Dori Carlson, OD, becomes the first female president of the AOA.

■ **1986**—Medicare Law amended to define optometrists as “physicians” and, therefore, allowed to be reimbursed for its services.

■ **December 26, 1991**—The Soviet Union is dissolved.

■ **January 2000**—*Review of Optometry* spins off its cornea and contact lens coverage into a standalone publication, *Review of Cornea & Contact Lenses*.

■ **August 4, 1961**—First Black US President Barack Obama born in Honolulu.

■ **November 22, 1963**—US President John F. Kennedy shot and killed in Dallas.

■ **1971**—Rhode Island passes first DPA law, securing legislative right for optometrists to use diagnostic drugs.

■ **1971**—Bausch + Lomb introduces SofLens, the first hydrogel contact lens.



■ **1972**—Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (VOSH) established.

■ **1988**—Optometrist Louis Catania publishes *Primary Care of the Anterior Segment*, an essential reference for examination and care of the cornea, uvea and ocular adnexa.

■ **1989**—Larry Alexander publishes *Primary Care of the Posterior Segment*, an essential reference for vitreoretinal examination and care.

■ **1993**—Joan Exford Korb, OD, becomes the first female president of the American Academy of Optometry.

■ **2009**—American Board of Optometry established with the aim of creating a board certification program to improve optometric participation in health care plans. Acrimony ensues as the idea polarizes the profession.

■ **March 23, 2010**—Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act signed into law. The Harkin Amendment (named after its champion, Sen. Tom Harkin) made sure health plans wouldn't discriminate against optometrists.

■ **1964**—AOA establishes the Vision Institute of America to accommodate the nationwide contract negotiated by the Teamsters Union to provide vision care and eyeglasses to its membership.

■ **February 9, 1964**—Ed Sullivan introduces American teenagers to The Beatles.

■ **January 16, 1968**—Optometry leaders hold the “La Guardia conference” in New York to debate if, and how, the profession can legislate drug privileges for expanded scope of practice (an unofficial meeting).

■ **February 10-12, 1969**—Airlie House conference of optometric leaders called by AOA to discuss if and how optometry could secure legislative privileges to use diagnostic and therapeutic drugs (an official meeting).

■ **January 15, 1967**—Green Bay Packers defeat the Kansas City Chiefs in the first Super Bowl, launching an event that continues to break television records.

■ **1976**—West Virginia signs first TPA law, giving ODs in the state the right to use therapeutic drugs as well as diagnostic ones.

■ **1976**—Congress passes a law establishing optometry services within the VA's Department of Medicine and Surgery.

■ **1978**—The Federal Trade Commission's “Eyeglasses I” ruling requires release of prescriptions to patients.

■ **1978**—OptiFair conference launched with emphasis on improving optometric business skills. Its success influenced the approach to optometric conventions nationally and regionally. In 1986, it became Vision Expo.



■ **1989**—English computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee invents the World Wide Web.



■ **September 4, 1998**—Google is founded by Stanford PhD students Larry Page and Sergey Brin.

■ **September 11, 2001**—Nearly 3,000 people from over 90 countries killed during coordinated attacks in New York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania.

■ **2016**—Influential optometric educators Larry Alexander and Norman Haffner pass away.

■ **June 23, 2016**—The United Kingdom's “Brexit” vote to leave the European Union causes economic and political upheaval.